

# Lifesaving Patrols Underway

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*ON PATROL ... Chiton Rocks' surf lifesavers (left to right) Paul Martin, Nathan Gray (treasurer), Lindy Lewis (club captain) and Aaron Lewis (president) kicked off the first patrol for the season last Saturday.*

REGION – With the start of summer in sight, Chiton Rocks, Port Elliot and Normanville surf lifesavers were among 18 clubs across the state to kick off patrols of our beaches last weekend.

As the temperature rises, so too does our red and yellow clad surf lifesavers' presence in their mission to keep our beaches safe.

Standard patrols will run every weekend and public holiday from the beginning of November until the end of March next year, from 1-5pm.

All three local clubs are anticipating yet another busy summer, with Chiton Rocks Surf Lifesaving Club extending its Saturday patrols between Xmas and Australia Day by an extra hour for the first time.

After a successful trial last year, Port Elliot Lifesaving Club will continue its extended patrol hours after Christmas when activity on the beach heats up.

Normanville is again expecting an influx of tourists to keep lifesavers busy and will survey its beaches for an extra hour in January.

While patrols have been extended, the club captain of Chiton Rocks Surf Lifesaving Club, Lindy Lewis, recommends the public to swim between the flags to make the best use of the service.

“There is a push for all clubs to not only increase patrol hours, but also the areas that are watched,” she said.

“While we will obviously try to keep an eye on people swimming outside of the flags, we do prefer people to swim within them, so that we can focus on one area.”

Assisting with shark warnings and rescues, beach patrols are supported by the Westpac Lifesaver Rescue Helicopter in the air.

The service recently received a major funding boost, with \$140,000 pledged by the State Government and almost \$1.1 million over three years from Westpac.

Port Elliot club captain Lucinda Remilton said that the helicopter is a big help in observing areas outside of the main patrol area, such as Middleton and Goolwa.

However, she reminds swimmers to be vigilant of their own safety.

“We always hope people will be sensible in the water and make sure they swim in safe places,” Lucinda said.

“The general public should think about what they’re doing and employ safe practices so as not to put themselves in danger.”

Club captain Todd Scheer identified the strong offshore winds as a particular concern at Normanville.

“Often parents put their children in an inflatable boat and they get swept out to sea, but they might not be able to swim,” he said.

“If we see parents with inflatable objects, we always try to pre-warn them.”

Despite tripling their junior numbers in the last three years, Normanville are particularly in need of more volunteers.

Surplus lifesavers at Aldinga and Moana are often required to volunteer make up numbers.

“We currently have 15 active members, so we are lacking a bit but we manage to get through each year,” Todd said.

“A real major thing for us is to get more members with their Bronze Medallion to help out with patrols; we always need more.”

Chiton Rocks, Port Elliot and Normanville all welcome new members and recommend potential surf lifesavers to contact a club as soon as possible.

Tips for safe swimming:

*\* As advised by the club captains of Chiton Rocks, Port Elliot and Normanville Surf Lifesaving Clubs.*

- Swim between the red and yellow flags.
- Swim with a buddy.
- Before entering the water select a stable landmark that won’t move, such as a tree or house, so you know if you have drifted or been caught in a rip.
- Only swim within your capabilities.
- Follow lifesavers’ instructions.
- Be very wary of off shore winds when using inflatable objects in the water. Keep children closely supervised and within reach at all time.
- Don’t hesitate to ask lifesavers for advice or information.
- Protect yourself from the sun.

### **Local patrols and surf lifesaving club details:**

**Chiton Rocks Surf Lifesaving Club**

- Patrols: standard patrol (weekends and public holidays, 1-5pm) plus surveillance patrol from 5-6pm on Saturdays between Christmas and Australia Day.
- To join: phone club captain Lindy Lewis 0417 809 828 or visit [www.chitonrocks.com](http://www.chitonrocks.com).

**Port Elliot Surf Lifesaving Club**

- Patrols: standard patrol, except 12-6pm from beginning of December until end of February.
- To join: phone president Rod Ellis 0411 751 355 or email [rellis@internode.on.net](mailto:rellis@internode.on.net).

**Normanville Surf Lifesaving Club**

- Patrols: standard patrols, except January 1-6pm.
- To join: phone club captain Todd Scheer 0400 582 168.